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Dear Senator/Representative:

We thank you for your continued, bipartisan commitment to appropriate funds that save lives, alleviate suffering, promote self-reliance, and cultivate just and peaceful societies. Generous and effective international assistance is a moral imperative to assist “the least of these,” promote human life and dignity, and enhance human security in our world. Such aid gives life to our values as a nation and is an essential component of United States leadership. As you contemplate fiscal year 2020 appropriations for programs under the subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs jurisdiction, **we urge you to oppose the Administration’s proposed cuts to foreign assistance and to fund the poverty-reducing humanitarian and development accounts to levels indicated in the attached chart.**

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) assess each budget decision by its ability to protect and uphold the dignity of the human person, with a preferential option for the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized. We have principled concerns with global health interventions inconsistent with Catholic teaching and neither implement nor advocate for these activities. Yet, we urge Congress to increase the international affairs budget to \$60 billion to guarantee robust diplomatic efforts to prevent conflict and to ensure protection of poverty-focused, life-saving international assistance.

We urge you to strongly oppose any proposals to repeal the Mexico City Policy (MCP). The MCP prevents foreign non-governmental organizations from receiving U.S. health assistance funds if they perform or promote abortion. Foreign aid should be used to improve people’s lives and health, not fund organizations that promote abortion in developing countries. We urge you to reject any attempt to undermine this policy before the legislation moves forward.

Pope Francis, in his message for the celebration of the 52nd World Day of Peace on January 1, wrote, “good politics is at the service of peace.” The United States has already experienced the suffering, death, and destruction provoked by the longest armed conflicts in our history. To stop our endless wars and prevent conflict and desperation in the poor and fragile countries of the world, the United States must first reorient its vision and international affairs strategy towards a more robust diplomatic and development-centered engagement. Former President of Côte d’Ivoire Felix Houphouët-Boigny once pointed out that negotiation always follows war and asked: would it not be better to sit down and talk first? Then there might not be a need to have recourse to arms. A greater focus on conflict prevention and increased funding to the poorest and most fragile states, as well as an elevated attention to care for creation and climate change, are necessary to meet the needs of communities and keep all people safe. In addition, to reach this goal, the United States should design a systematic and strategic partnership with civil society and faith-based communities in the developing world.

We commend Congress’ steadfast leadership to address humanitarian crises and assist the more than 132 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. **We urge Congress to increase FY20 funding for International Disaster Assistance and Migration and Refugee Assistance, and to continue supporting Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance, given unprecedented levels of forced displacement.** From Venezuela to Burma to the West Bank and Gaza, U.S. humanitarian leadership requires more than the allocation of funds and distribution of goods and services. At CRS, we are committed to working with local partners, especially domestic Caritas agencies and faith-

based organizations, to empower them to be effective and impactful leaders. U.S. led humanitarian efforts must focus on building local capacity and strengthening resilience of host communities.

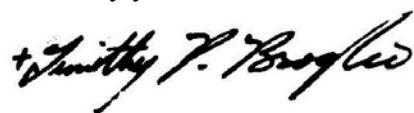
U.S. diplomatic engagement and political solutions are also necessary to alleviate suffering, resolve conflict, and recognize human rights and dignity. In South Sudan and the Central African Republic, for example, CRS has been working with faith leaders to bring healing and reconciliation to communities suffering from years of trauma. **Therefore, we urge the committee to continue to support Church leaders seeking to bring resolution to ongoing violence and suffering and to maintain its investments in peacekeeping, the Atrocities Prevention Board, the Complex Crisis Fund, and the U.S. Institute of Peace.**

We also applaud Congress's efforts to meet global development challenges. USAID's Journey to Self-Reliance requires increased investments to catalyze development outcomes at scale. We have many lessons to share from our own experience transitioning assistance, including as a Track I implementer of PEPFAR and as a partner of the Global Fund. USAID has set a worthy goal, but must provide sufficient time, resources, and support for local partners to grow. Helping countries along their Journey to Self-Reliance is a long-term process, which will require increased, enduring development investments, if it is to yield sustained results. **We therefore urge you to increase critical investments funded by the Development Assistance account, support Economic Support funds that achieve the goal of poverty reduction, and increase funds to morally-appropriate, life-saving Global Health accounts.**

With U.S. leadership, in partnership with Church agencies the world over, we have made incredible progress in reducing poverty and alleviating suffering. Millions of Catholics steadfastly support U.S. led efforts to serve the poor and the vulnerable overseas. Nevertheless, there remain major barriers to human development, especially for the most vulnerable and marginalized people among us. These barriers threaten our shared goals to promote the common good and uphold human dignity. The U.S., partnering with faith-based organizations and other countries and agencies of good will, must confront these barriers head on.

We thank you for your leadership to maintain these critical accounts. We urge you to protect this funding in fiscal year 2020, most notably conflict prevention, emergency assistance, development assistance, poverty reduction, to reject any language repealing the Mexico City Policy, and continue our nation's steadfast commitment to the poor and the vulnerable to create a better world for us all.

Sincerely yours,



Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio
Archbishop for the
Military Services, USA
Chair, Committee on International
Justice and Peace
United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops



Most Reverend Joe S. Vasquez
Bishop of Austin, Texas
Chair Committee on Migration
United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops



Mr. Sean Callahan
President and CEO
Catholic Relief Services

Attachment: [SFOPs chart]



International Poverty-Reducing Development and Humanitarian Accounts



Appropriations Accounts (\$ in thousands) (OCO included)	FY 18 Omnibus	FY 19 Omnibus	Administration's FY 20 Request*	USCCB/CRS FY 20 Request	FY 20 House Bill
<i>State, Foreign Operations (SFOPs)</i>	21,788,823	22,231,438	-----	25,066,555	24,386,041
Maternal and Child Health (including GAVI)	829,500	835,000	619,600	850,000	850,000
Nutrition	125,000	145,000	78,500	145,000	145,000
Vulnerable Children (orphans and displaced children)	23,000	24,000	-----	27,000	24,000
HIV/AIDS (USAID)	330,000	330,000	-----	330,000	330,000
Malaria	755,000	755,000	674,000	755,000	755,000
Tuberculosis	261,000	302,000	261,000	310,000	310,000
Neglected Tropical Diseases	100,000	102,500	75,000	105,950	102,500
Global Health Security	72,550	100,000	90,000	100,000	100,000
PEPFAR (including Global Fund)	5,670,000	5,720,000	4,308,400	5,930,000	5,930,000
Development Assistance (including Water, Basic Ed) ⁱ	3,000,000	3,000,000	-----	4,164,867	4,164,867
International Disaster Assistance ⁱⁱ	4,285,312	4,385,312	-----	4,500,000	4,435,312
Migration and Refugee Assistance ⁱⁱⁱ	3,359,000	3,432,000	365,000	3,604,000	3,532,000
Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	1,000
Complex Crises Fund	30,000	30,000	0	30,000	30,000
Millennium Challenge Account	905,000	905,000	800,000	905,000	905,000
Atrocities Prevention Board (ESF & INCLE)	5,750	5,500	-----	5,750	5,000
Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities	1,382,080	1,551,000	1,136,000	2,128,414	2,128,414
Peacekeeping Operations	537,925	488,670	291,435	552,940	516,348
Green Climate Fund (Treasury)	0	0	0	500,000	0
U.S. Institute of Peace	37,884	38,634	19,000	38,634	38,600
Anti-Trafficking in Persons (DA, ESF, AEECA, INCLE)	78,822	80,822	-----	83,000	83,000
<i>Agricultural (Ag)</i>	1,923,626	1,926,255	0	2,110,255	
Title II Food for Peace ^{iv}	1,716,000	1,716,000	-----	1,900,000	
McGovern-Dole	207,626	210,255	0	210,255	
<i>Labor, Health and Human Services (LHHS)</i>	86,125	86,125	18,500	89,825	89,825
Bureau of International Labor Affairs (DOL/ILAB)	86,125	86,125	18,500	89,825	89,825
COMBINED TOTAL	23,798,574	24,243,818	-----	27,266,635	

* ----- Indicates specific number is not included in the administration's request or the administration has proposed consolidating account.

Summary of Message to Congress and Account Descriptions

The Church views international assistance as an essential tool to promote human life and dignity, advance solidarity with developing nations, and enhance human security. The USCCB and CRS prioritize the accounts below because they are most focused on saving lives and reducing poverty. This assistance is just over one-half percent of the federal budget, not the 20-25% many Americans believe it constitutes. We urge Congress to **fund international poverty-reducing development and humanitarian programs to meet urgent needs and invest in peace.**

Maternal and Child Health programs provide low-cost, life-saving interventions such as micronutrient supplementation, nutritional support, newborn care, immunization, and treatment of pneumonia and diarrheal disease – addressing the biggest killers of mothers and children in the developing world. This account also provides funding for the U.S. contribution to GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, which purchases vaccines for children in poor countries.

Nutrition programs provide interventions such as micronutrient supplementation and growth monitoring, which combined with an adequate diet and clean water and sanitation, improves outcomes during the first critical years of a child's life.

Vulnerable Children programs address the special needs of displaced children and orphans.

HIV and AIDS PEPFAR (USAID & State Funding) funding focuses on prevention, care and treatment, and the support of children affected and infected by HIV and AIDS. Although we have principled concerns about those PEPFAR prevention activities we find inconsistent with Catholic teaching and do not implement or advocate for these activities, we support PEPFAR's overall lifesaving mission and urge robust funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.

Malaria programs treat, prevent, and control this deadly disease which is one of the biggest killers of children under five worldwide.

Tuberculosis programs screen, diagnose, and treat millions of people each year. TB is the leading infectious killer globally.

Neglected Tropical Diseases programs focus on scaling up integrated treatment to prevent parasitic and bacterial diseases that cause morbidity and mortality.

Global Health Security programs prevent, prepare for, and respond to unanticipated and emerging global health threats.

ⁱ **Development Assistance** programs support an array of critical development activities, including basic education; Global Food Security Act implementation; clean water and sanitation; microfinance, democracy promotion and good governance, and conflict management and mitigation. *The Administration's FY20 request consolidates economic and development assistance into the Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF) account, reducing overall funding by 23% from FY19 enacted.*

ⁱⁱ **International Disaster Assistance** funds emergency health, water, shelter and nutrition efforts, as well as disaster risk reduction and rehabilitation through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). It also supports cash and voucher-based emergency food security programming via the Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP). *The Administration's FY20 request consolidates IDA, part of MRA, and FFP into one account, reducing overall funding by 35% from FY19 enacted.*

ⁱⁱⁱ **Migration and Refugee Assistance** protects refugees and internally displaced persons, helps them to repatriate when conflict ends or natural disaster responses permit, and supports resettlement to safe countries like the U.S. This level would fund the admission process for 75,000 refugees to the U.S. *The Administration's FY20 request eliminates funding for humanitarian assistance and funds the Refugee Admissions Program and administrative expenses for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.*

Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance is a drawdown account used, with Presidential authority, to respond to humanitarian crises. The administration has not utilized this funding. ERMA is currently capped at \$100 million.

Complex Crisis Fund enables rapid investments to catalyze peace and mitigate conflict in the face of unforeseen crises or violence.

Millennium Challenge Account provides U.S. funding to countries with a commitment to good governance, focusing on infrastructure projects.

Atrocities Prevention Board (APB) improves collaboration, analysis and information sharing to mobilize U.S. efforts to prevent future atrocities and crises.

Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities deploy peacekeeping troops to protect civilians in places like Sudan and Somalia. Based on UN assessed rates of contribution, the U.S. is currently in arrears estimated at more than \$750 million.

Peacekeeping Operations finances the training and equipping of peacekeeping troops and the professionalization of militia groups committed to protecting their people.

Green Climate Fund provides assistance to developing countries to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change. In lieu of Green Climate Fund, other multilateral and bilateral program to address climate change adaption and mitigation should be considered.

U.S. Institute of Peace works to prevent, reduce, and resolve armed conflict around the world by providing analysis, education, and resources to those working for peace.

Combatting Trafficking in Persons US assistance helps other nations to prevent trafficking, prosecute perpetrators, and support victims.

^{iv} **Title II Food for Peace** provides U.S. food aid for emergencies and funds \$350 million in long-term development programs that support nutrition and build resilience. *The Administration's FY20 request consolidates IDA, part of MRA, and FFP into one account, reducing overall funding by 35% from FY19 enacted.*

McGovern-Dole provides school lunches and take-home food rations to encourage students, especially girls, to attend school, and other school support efforts. At least \$15 million should provide for local and regionally procured commodities for sustainability.

Bureau of International Labor Affairs funds programs to combat the worst forms of child labor, forced labor, and trafficking in persons.